

Bureau of the OACPS Committee of Ambassadors and German Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development discuss current priorities

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Brussels, 10 September 2020/OACPS: As the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) works with its European counterpart to finalise the post-Cotonou negotiations, H.E. Dr. Gerd Müller, German Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, led a delegation on 7 September 2020, to exchange views with members of the Bureau of the Committee of Ambassadors at OACPS House.

The Federal Republic of Germany currently holds the leadership of the European Union rotating presidency. Also included in the meeting were the Secretary-General of the OACPS, H.E. Mr. Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti and the head of the Ambassadorial Central Negotiating Group, Ambassador of the Republic of Togo to Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the Holy See and the European Union, H.E. Mr. Kokou Nayo M'beou, who outlined the state of play of the post-Cotonou partnership agreement, which is due to be concluded during the German presidency.

In his presentation, Minister Müller stressed that Europe needed to strengthen its cooperation with the OACPS. Identifying key areas of assistance such as climate change, trade and investment and COVID-19 response strategies, the German Minister made it clear that Europe, as a collection of developed nations, is aware of the continued inequities in the current world order and is prepared to do its part to ensure more sustainable and equitable development for all.

With respect to the COVID-19 crisis, the Minister acknowledged the severe and disproportionate effect of the pandemic on the Members of the OACPS. Speaking of plans to make the World Health Organization a worldwide pandemic centre, Minister Müller indicated that it was necessary to take on board the lessons learnt from the pandemic. He also assured the meeting of the EU's support to ensure equitable access to the vaccine for the entire world and to extend measures related to the European Green Deal to Members of the OACPS.

In his welcome address, Secretary-General Chikoti called for global solidarity in light of the increased fragmentation in the wake of the Coronavirus: "With the pandemic, we have witnessed the acceleration of the current, negative trend towards a more polarized and fragmented world. Apart from its socio-economic impact on all countries, the pandemic has amplified this geopolitical fragmentation and magnified fault lines between nations. In the era of a globalized, interdependent, interconnected and constantly changing world, there is a call for global solidarity. This can be achieved through the promotion of collaborative, transparent and robust coordinated approaches and partnerships."

During the meeting, the representatives of the six regions of the OACPS throughout sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, summarized the important issues in their respective regions, with a view to prioritizing the most impactful and effective support from the current EU presidency. Among the items discussed, the ambassadors addressed the pertinent issues of debt relief and the unilateral publication of the EU's Anti-Money Laundering Blacklist which includes several OACPS Members.

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